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PREVIEW
Low Resolution

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The Crapp Family Singers
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Magnamusic Distributors, Inc.
English revised edition

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Edition 11227
ISBN 0 901938 51 3

Published by arrangement
with Magnamusic Distributors, Inc.

S. & Co. 6951

PREVIEW
Low Resolution

INTRODUCTION (to the English revised edition 1975)

The recorder is today one of the most widely played musical instruments in education and in amateur circles to its position in the professional world of recording and broadcasting, in the interpretation of early music and the more avant-garde compositions.

The history of the recorder goes back at least to the beginning of the Middle Ages with a hiatus in the nineteenth century — the period of its neglect by the public and schools. Its repertory is probably more extensive than that of any other woodwind instrument.

The start of the recorder revival, after a century of disuse, was due to the complexities of modern music were driving composers to seek new and more expressive means of expression. These they began to find in the music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the recorders of which they were using.

Their introduction into schools began in the 1940s and has spread ever since. As a school instrument, the recorder is an ideal one to start with a simple beginning with a proper musical instrument which will last a long time and can continue throughout his time at school. It is an instrument which can give pleasure from taking part in ensembles.

The present method is based on the work of the late Miss Camilla Hunt, Vermont, U.S.A. and was first published in 1953. The Trapp Family have been teaching people of all ages and of all ages for many years. The Trapp Family Singers had been playing recorders in concerts in Canada, Central and South America, the Caribbean and the Hawaiian Islands.

There have been many other methods of recorder teaching for school use. This Trapp Family Recorder Method is a good one but it is also more suitable for small groups and individuals. It is well adapted to the needs of the individual.

The present method is in line with recorder teaching in the U.S.A. and is a choice of fingerings and countless other details which are on the other side of the Atlantic. The underlying method is the same as that of the other side of the Atlantic.

Edgar Hunt

A few notes have "alternative" fingerings, which are also listed. These are of three types, and are explained in each case where they appear.

(1) An "alternative" fingering is one which produces the same note as the "regular" fingering, but may be easier to use when the previous or the following note is very different from the "regular" fingering of this note. Thus, in going up the scale through a certain note, the "regular" fingering may prove the easier. Coming down, the "alternative" may be the easier. Each case is explained in the text.

(2) Another type of "alternative" fingering is given, in a very few cases, to make a difference in makes of recorders. For instance, an "alternative" fingering is given in Lesson VI with the caution to use it only if your particular recorder does not respond using the "regular" fingering. Such fingerings should not be used unless necessary on a particular recorder.

(3) Trill fingerings (complete chart of these may be found in the "Appendix") are in some cases "alternative" fingerings, too. In these cases, the accuracy of pitch is less important than ease and speed.

CARING FOR YOUR RECORDER

Before Playing: A new wooden recorder should be broken in gradually. Take the instrument apart, wipe the joints and the inside of each part with a cloth dipped sparingly in woodwind oil. Do not use too much oil. Do not use the block (plug). (See "Parts of a Recorder" in the Appendix.) Let the instrument dry for twelve hours, then rub off the surplus oil with a clean cloth. The instrument should be oiled occasionally (three or four times a year) to keep the wood in good condition. Do not oil after playing until the instrument is completely dry. Do not store the instrument in the sunlight.

After Playing: A new instrument should be held in your hands until it is thoroughly warm. The instrument should be warm when you start playing to protect the wood against cracking. Try to keep the instrument from forming in the mouthpiece which blurs the tone.

Playing: Blow firmly without overblowing. Overblowing produces a harsh tone. Do not occasionally run the instrument in the higher range. If you blow too gently the tone will be dull and lifeless.

A new wooden recorder should be broken in gradually, and not played for more than a few minutes a day for the first two or three days, gradually increasing the playing time.

The upper notes require even more gradual breaking in. Spend a few practice sessions on each upper note, starting with the "G".

In the narrow opening between block and mouthpiece, moisture sometimes collects and blurs the tone. In this case place the soft part of your fingertip across the aperture and blow sharply.

After Playing: Dry your instrument. Take your recorder apart and wipe out the inside of each section gently with a dry mop, again being careful not to touch the block nor aperture of the mouthpiece. Let it dry completely before putting it away in its case or box.

HOLDING YOUR RECORDER

With The Fingers:

LEFT thumb covers the hole in the back (thumb hole)
 1st (index) finger covers 1st hole in the front
 2nd (middle) finger covers 2nd hole in the front
 3rd (ring) finger covers 3rd hole in the front

RIGHT 1st finger covers 4th hole in the front
 2nd finger covers 5th hole in the front
 3rd finger covers 6th hole in the front
 4th finger covers 7th hole in the front

Use the pads of the fingers, and not the tips, to cover the holes.



The Lips:

Hold the mouthpiece between your lips in front of the teeth. Close your lips around the top of the mouthpiece in a relaxed and comfortable position, opening them only to breathe at the end of a phrase or at the breathing marks indicated by a comma above the staff.

PLAYING THE RECORDER

Blowing

There are three stages in producing a note:

1. The Attack or start.

To start a note you use your tongue as if saying "d" to attack the air and give the tone a clear and distinct start. This is called *diaphragm tongued* unless it is connected to the preceding note by a slur.

2. Blowing.

Blow firmly and support your breath as you would when speaking throughout to keep your pitch.

The more pressure, the higher the pitch; the less pressure, the lower the pitch.

The less pressure, the lower the pitch; the more pressure, the higher the pitch.

Even, steady blowing will make your recorder sound pleasant.

3. Closings.

To end or close a note, hold your breath as if saying a "D" which remains unpronounced, and then release the air gradually.

Finger Action

The three rules for finger action are:

1. Down.

2. Hold firmly but lightly.

Each finger has only the holes indicated for it, and when a finger is not in use, the hole is kept open. The right-hand little finger helps to hold the recorder.

To play the recorder well you need co-ordination of tongue and fingers, accurate blowing, good breath control, and musicianship.

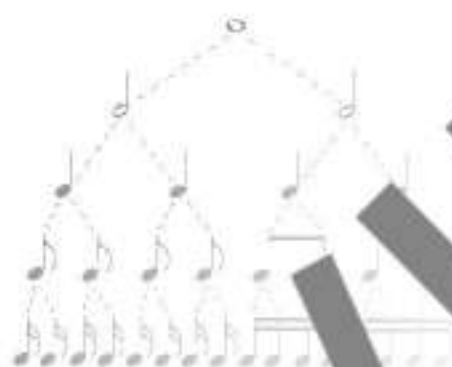
SYMBOLS USED IN MUSIC NOTATION

The following is not intended as a substitute for a teacher, for it is neither complete nor self-explanatory. It is to be used as a reference page to help you remember some of the symbols we use in writing music.

The Shape of Notes and Rests

The relative duration (length of time) of a note or rest is indicated by its shape. Though you cannot tell the actual duration of a note by its shape alone, you can tell how it compares with the other notes in the same composition. The following chart shows these relationships:

Each note is twice as long as the note beneath it:



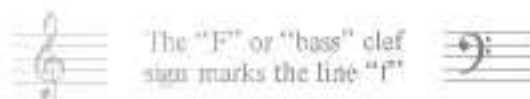
The same relationship exists between rests:



A second rest is shown below the first, illustrating the original duration of the note.



The pitch of a note, is indicated by the note's position on the staff. The higher its position on the staff the higher the pitch to be played. The clef sign placed at the beginning of the staff helps tell the names of the lines and spaces. The "G" or "treble" clef marks the line "G" —



Sometimes it is necessary to cause a line or space to represent a pitch one semitone higher than it normally does. This is indicated by placing a sharp (#) on the proper line, or in the proper space. Similarly, a line or space can represent a pitch one semitone lower by placing a flat (b) on, or in, it.



When a note or a line has been sharp or flat, it is returned to the natural note by placing the natural (♮) symbol in front of the note or line. This cancels the effect of the sharp or flat.